

Michelle MacKenzie

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on wolf management in Washington.

I oppose the use of taxpayer funds for the lethal management of wolves. Instead, I believe that the state should prioritize the use of non-lethal management of wolves and education of the public for coexistence with these native carnivores.

In particular, wolves and other native wildlife should be given precedence on public lands. These animals have nowhere else to go and our public lands should be set aside for our wildlife. Wolves provide important ecosystem services, as aptly demonstrated by the movie *Wolves Change Rivers* which documents the reintroduction of wolves to the Yellowstone ecosystem. Biodiversity increases dramatically with the presence of wolves in the landscape. Therefore, wolves should be given priority on public lands - especially in wild roadless regions.

In addition, I vehemently oppose the hunting or lethal management of wolves and other native predators. There should be strict penalties in place for poaching of wolves.

Where wolves and cattle coexist - particularly on public lands - wolves should be given priority. Lethal management should never be an option on public lands. Livestock producers should "assume the risk" when they choose to avail themselves of the bargain and privilege of grazing their livestock on our public lands. In such situations of chronic depredation, there should be interagency collaboration to consider grazing modifications, suspensions and retirements. Native wildlife must take first priority on Washington's public lands.

In all instances, management of wolves and other native predators in the state should be directed by the best available science and not by economics or politics.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the management of this important native species.